

support of patentability were made which are also similar to those presented below. The Examiner indicated that he considered these as "raising new issues" and kindly suggested that they be incorporated in a Request For Continued Examination (RCE). That suggestion is being carried out hereby.

Claims 1 and 2, which are the only independent claims in the case, have been amended to make it perfectly clear that the heating of the blank into a plastic flow consistency takes place in a stage which is located outside the mold in which the material then assumes its final shape.

These amendments are believed to be fully supported by both the specification and the drawings.

Regarding the outstanding final Office Action, the rejection of claims 1 and 2 under 35 USC 112 is believed to have been overcome by the above-mentioned amendments, since these have eliminated the objected-to "dough-like or honey-like" terminology and otherwise clarified the claims.

Claims 1 and 2 are also among those claims which were rejected under 35 USC 102 over the European patent 0 373 294, or over the Japanese patent JP02-145327 either alone or in combination with the above-mentioned European patent.

This rejection is believed to be unwarranted with respect to the amended claims 1 and 2 because neither the two so-applied references, nor for that matter any of the

other references mentioned in the final Office Action, disclose a technique in which the heating of the blank to a plastic flow state is performed in a stage that is separate from the mold in which the ultimate object is then shaped.

Thus, claims 1 and 2 as amended are believed to be allowable and so are the remaining claims 3 - 16 as well as new claim 27, all of which are dependent on claim 1 and therefore partake of the latter's distinguishing limitations.

As for (amended) claim 7, this further distinguishes from the cited references by reciting a reciprocating extrusion-pressing process, which is not disclosed in any of the references.

As for claim 9, it is applicant's understanding that carbon or graphite has been used as a mold release material only for metal and not for thermoplastic materials. Since the rejection of claim 9 does not cite a source for the alleged use of such a release in the prior art, applicant respectfully requests such citation.

Finally, with respect to new claim 27, this distinguishes further by reciting the performance of the reciprocating extrusion-pressing process several times. Such repeated reciprocating process is not disclosed in any of the references, either individually or in combination.

In view of all the above, it is submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance and corresponding action is hereby solicited.

Applicant: Loher et al.
Application N . 08/849,746:

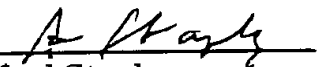
NEW CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

A new correspondence address is also provided for this RCE. That new address is that of Customer No. 3624.

It is requested that future communications be directed to this new correspondence address.

Respectfully submitted,

Loher et al.

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Attachment

Application No.: 08/849,746

Examiner: S. Staicovici

**37 CFR §1.121(b)(1)(iii) and (c)(1)(ii) SPECIFICATION
AND CLAIM AMENDMENTS- MARKED UP VERSION**

1. A process for manufacturing components made of fiber-reinforced thermoplastic materials, where a blank formed of fibers and [a] thermoplastic materials is first pre-finished, and said blank is brought into a final form of a component in a negative mold, under pressure, in a hot-forming process, comprising the steps of:

heating the entire blank to a forming temperature with [dough-like, or honey-like] plastic flow consistency in a heating stage located outside the negative mold,

pressing said heated blank into the negative mold, and

shaping the blank in the negative mold by virtue of the entire blank flowing from the heating stage into and filling up the negative mold.

2. A process for manufacturing components which are under stress, made of fiber-reinforced thermoplastic materials, where a blank formed with a fiber proportion of more than 50 volume-% and with at least predominant use of endless fibers and said fiber-reinforced thermoplastic material is first pre-finished, and said blank is brought into a final form of a component in a negative mold, under pressure, in a hot-forming process, comprising the steps of:

heating the entire blank to a forming temperature with [dough-like, or honey-like] plastic flow consistency in a heating stage located outside the negative mold,

pressing said heated blank into the negative mold, and
shaping the blank in the negative mold by virtue of the entire blank flowing
from the heating stage into and filling up the negative mold.

7. The process according to Claim 1, wherein the shaping of the blank is
accomplished by a [push-pull] reciprocating extrusion-pressing process.